

City of Monmouth

City Manager's Report

A Report on City of Monmouth News, Happenings, Successes and Other Items

October 14, 2013

Dog Park

Monmouth is currently constructing a new amenity to our fine city - a dog park. Dog parks have become popular over the last few years. They are essentially a fenced area where dogs can play off leash. While the idea had been floated in Monmouth previously, it gained fresh momentum when a citizen group approached the City and made a good case for constructing a park. Next, the citizen group, our Parks and Recreation Commission, the City Council and staff delved into location, design and funding issues.



Dog Park Pathway and Drainage Work

One design element that we really needed to take into account was rain and soggy ground. We found out that dog parks that did not account for this ended up turning to mud and dead grass in the rainy season. Some parks have to close during the wet season. The location that was selected for the dog park is in the Monmouth Recreation Park, which is accessed off of the "S-Curves" near our City Shops and MINET. The just over one-acre park will consist of big dog and little dog areas and is bordered by Monmouth Elementary School, a ball field and the tennis courts. To address soggy ground issues and to

extend the times of year when the park can be used, we are installing drainage as part of the project. We are also providing a paved pathway from the parking lot to the dog park to make sure is it accessible to all users. We are hoping the open the park by the end of the month.

Urban Renewal Mini-Project

Urban Renewal projects can come in many shapes and sizes. Our most recent "big" projects were the Main Street Streetscape project, which significantly improved the appearance of our entrance to Downtown, and the installation of the new Main Street Park fountain. There are also smaller ways to improve our Downtown. An example of this is the currently under construction "mini-project" on the Monmouth Ave. side of Sing Fay restaurant. The sidewalk in this section was an unattractive jumble of concrete and asphalt that was in poor condition. It didn't serve very well as the entrance to Downtown from the WOU campus. For less than \$10,000 (thus the mini), this sidewalk will be improved to look like the rest of Downtown. Although our Downtown is in great shape thanks to the efforts of our local businesses, building owners and the City, we'll keep finding ways to make it even better.



Monmouth Ave. Sidewalk Reconstruction

Police Station Update

The City is now the proud owner of the building (former Forest Capital offices) on Highway 99 that will become our new police station. Our first task after taking possession of the building was to do some grounds maintenance. We now have it under contract for landscaping services. We are currently in the process of selecting a professional construction project manager to help us ensure we get the best product for the best price. After hiring a project manager to shepherd this project, we will then select an architect/engineering firm to prepare final designs and construction documents. We hope to have construction ready plans in hand by February 2014. If everything goes well, we should have construction starting on the building by June 2014, with completion of the project and move in by December 2014.

New Student Feed

Each year, the Monmouth Business Association (MBA) sponsors a free food event for incoming WOU freshmen and transfers. Area businesses set up booths so they can introduce students to their products and services. Once the students visit all of the vendors, they are treated to a hamburger or chicken dinner. Thirty vendors participated in this year's event. This was my seventh event as a volunteer. As I took a break from my food line duties, I walked the vendor areas and was very impressed with the displays set up by our local businesses. They provided great information and really stepped up their game in the area of samples and freebies for the students. Good job to everyone involved for showing these important student customers what we have to offer. The Student Feed is a very fun event and a great partnership between MBA and WOU.

Senior Center Expansion

If you've followed the efforts of senior center volunteers and the City to expand the Center, you know it's been a difficult process. The Senior Center is bursting at the seams and it continues to add new programs and services. When the expansion was originally designed, we thought we had a good opportunity to acquire a grant that

would have funded the entire project. Unfortunately, this option didn't work out. As an energetic team successfully raised tens of thousands of dollars for the project, we looked into other grant sources. These sources were hit hard by the recession and couldn't offer funds like they used to. In the face of disappointment that the project couldn't seem to gain traction, we stepped back and took another look at the overall design. An alternative plan was developed that met most expansion needs, but at a much lower cost than the original design. Expansion partners are carefully reviewing the new plan and how it lines up with existing funds and future fundraising efforts.

Election

Several ballot measures that impact Monmouth will be on the November 5, 2013 Special Election ballot. Monmouth Annexation Measure 27-108 requests annexation of a 5.6 acre parcel into the city. Polk County Public Safety Measure 27-109 would provide funding for several aspects of the County's public safety system. Polk County Fire District #1 Measure 27-110 would provide funding for district emergency services. Ballots will be arriving in the mail after October 18, 2013.

If you have any questions about items in this report or anything related to the City, please call me at 503-751-0146 or e-mail me at smcclure@ci.monmouth.or.us.

Scott McClure
City Manager

